



## COUNTY OF PLACER FACILITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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April 7, 2009

Sheridan Municipal Advisory Council  
Jim Houck, Chairman  
Via email and/or FAX To All MAC Members

### **RE: Response to Questions Relating to Sewer and Water Fees**

Members of the Sheridan MAC:

During the Sewer and Water Fee Increase presentation by Facility Services to your MAC on March 11, 2009, I promised to get back to you with responses to several questions that I could not answer at the time. Here are the questions and responses.

**1. Is it possible to reserve new connections that may become available in the future for the lots within town that are currently restricted from development?**

There are potential legal complications with attempting to provide connections on any basis other than "first come, first served". Placer County does not currently have any ordinance in place that would allow preferential treatment for infill development of appropriately zoned lots. On the other hand, the community will have opportunities to provide input into decisions regarding new developments. Developers that propose multi-family, commercial or residential subdivision projects must go through a lengthy process to complete environmental review and obtain use permits before they can apply for sewer and water connections. The MAC can review these projects and provide comments to the appropriate hearing body. Members of the public may also participate in the hearing process. At the present time there are no applications pending at the Planning Department for the Sheridan area that would rely on public sewer and water.

Residents who have appropriately zoned lots that they wish to develop as single family units will typically need a building permit to secure their sewer and water connections.

11476 C Avenue Auburn CA 95603  
Entrance at 2855 2nd Street

Administration - Building Maintenance - Capital Improvements - Museums - Parks  
Property Management - Environmental Engineering - Utilities

**2. When can people apply for new connections to the sewer and water systems?**

We cannot currently provide any assurance that new connections will be available within any specific time frame; therefore, no date has yet been established for taking applications for new connections. Our focus now is to line up funding and consultant contracts to insure that the capital projects that are expected to provide new capacity can move forward as planned. It is unlikely that we could consider accepting applications before December of 2010. We will notify the community of progress towards this goal at future meetings of the Municipal Advisory Council.

**3. What will the connection fee be if the moratorium on sewer and water fees is lifted?**

It is too early to predict what connection fees the Board of Supervisors might establish if new connections become available for sewer and water services in Sheridan. The existing approved connection fees per Equivalent Dwelling Unit for Sheridan are \$1,700 for sewer and \$1,500 for water. Because of the ongoing moratorium on new connections, these fees have not been adjusted since 1985. Staff will recommend re-evaluating these fees utilizing a methodology that takes into consideration the value of previous investments that will benefit new users divided by the number of potential new users.

Sewer connection fees in other local districts typically range between \$6,000-\$9,000 per connection. The Placer County Water Agency charges \$15,000 for a standard water service connection. Costs for the Sheridan County Service Area may be more or less depending on capital costs and the level of grant funding for the sewer and water projects.

**4. When counting protest letters, does every parcel get a vote or do some parcels count more than others.**

Protest letters from property owners receiving sewer or water service will be weighted based on the number of Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) currently charged to that customer. Size of the parcel is not a factor. Renters may submit comment letters to the Board of Supervisors, but these letters will not be considered official protest letters unless also signed by the property owner.

**5. How would submittal of a signed petition opposing the fee increase be considered when evaluating protests?**

The Board of Supervisors may consider such testimony and other documents that may be provided to it as part of its consideration of the proposed fee increases. A signed petition that by itself does not meet Proposition 218 protest requirements would not be considered a valid protest under applicable protest counting procedures. The County has identified in its notices to property owners the necessary elements for a valid protest to be considered. These include identification of the subject parcel and identification of the property owner. Any petitions or other documents submitted to the County as protests would be reviewed for compliance with these requirements.

**6. Could the fee increase be spread over five years instead of three years as proposed?**

Spreading the fee increase out over a longer period of time could only be accomplished with additional appropriations from the Placer County General Fund. The Board of Supervisors has already agreed to forgive loans totaling \$1,370,000, provide project matching funds totaling \$550,000, and subsidize operating costs for the next three years at an estimated cost of \$440,000. Staff believes that requests for further General Fund contributions would not be well received at this time.

**7. Can the County provide assistance to low income and elderly residents who will be impacted by higher fees?**

Representatives from the Placer County Department of Health and Human Services will be present at the meeting to provide a detailed response to this question.

I look forward to discussing these issues with you in greater detail at your April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Sincerely,



Will Dickinson  
Deputy Director of Facility Services